

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 GABORO 03206 01 OF 03 161116Z

ACTION AF-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-07

L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

USIA-06 AID-05 EB-08 TRSE-00 OMB-01 COME-00

AGRE-00 PC-01 IO-13 MMO-01 /086 W

-----070558 161129Z /11

R 160827Z DEC 77

FM AMEMBASSY GABORONE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1267

INFO AMEMBASSY MBABANE

AMEMBASSY MAPUTO POUCH

AMEMBASSY MASERU POUCH

AMEMBASSY PRETORIA POUCH

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 3 GABORONE 3206

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: AMGT PFOR WZ

SUBJ: SWAZILAND: POLICY OBJECTIVES, POLITICAL ASSESSMENT AND
RESOURCE RECOMMENDATIONS

REF: STATE 291277

1. INTRODUCTION: FOLLOWING IS ASSESSMENT OF THE SITUATION IN SWAZILAND WITH EMPHASIS ON KEY CURRENT POLICY ISSUE, NAMELY, WHAT IS APPROPRIATE LEVEL OF AID AND PCV PRESENCE IN SWAZILAND. IT WAS PREPARED IN CONSULTATION WITH CHARGE WACHOB WHO DRAFTED MOST OF PARAGRAPH 5 AND CONTRIBUTED TO BOTH ASSESSMENT AND RECOMMENDATIONS. THE ASSESSMENT FOCUSES ON CURRENT POLITICAL DEVELOPMENTS AND THEIR INFLUENCE ON STAFFING RECOMMENDATIONS WHICH, IN TURN, RELATE TO OUR ABILITY TO CARRY OUT U.S. GOALS AND OBJECTIVES. U.S. POLICY RE SWAZILAND PRESENTLY EMPHASIZES TWO POINTS: SUPPORT FOR ITS INDEPENDENCE AND ASSISTANCE TO MAINTAIN STABILITY.

A) IN SWAZILAND'S OVERWHELMINGLY AGRICULTURAL SOCIETY, RURAL
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 GABORO 03206 01 OF 03 161116Z

DEVELOPMENT ASSISTANCE IS A CENTRAL FOCUS OF EFFORTS TO PROVIDE THAT SUPPORT AND STRENGTHEN THAT STABILITY. USAID MISSION IN MBABANE IS STAFFED, INTER ALIA, TO MANAGE THE SIZABLE PRESENT AND CONTEMPLATED U.S. CONTRIBUTION TO SWAZILAND'S ESTIMATED \$40 MILLION MULTI-DONOR RURAL DEVELOPMENT ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (RDAP). MBABANE IS ALSO THE REGIONAL AID HEADQUARTERS (OSARAC) COVERING BOTSWANA AND LESOTHO AS WELL. OF 22 U.S. DIRECT HIRE

AID EMPLOYEES ACTUALLY IN THE BLS COUNTRIES, 14 ARE IN MBABANE WITH OSARAC. AID/W IS PRESENTLY REVIEWING THE ORGANIZATION AND STRUCTURE OF ITS OPERATIONS IN SOUTHERN AFRICA, AND SPECIFICALLY IN BLS, WITH A VIEW TO DETERMINING HOW LARGE A STAFF IS NEEDED AND WHERE THEY SHOULD BE LOCATED.

B) PEACE CORPS SWAZILAND INCLUDES SOME 140 PCVS. PCD IN MBABANE HAS, ON HIS OWN, DECIDED THIS NUMBER IS EXCESSIVE AND I HAVE WITH HIS CONCURRENCE RECOMMENDED A PROGRESSIVE REDUCTION TO 90.

C) THE QUESTIONS UNDER ACTIVE CONSIDERATION ARE

1) TO WHAT DEGREE CAN OR SHOULD WE RELY ON SWAZILAND AS BASE FOR REGIONAL AID OPERATIONS, AND

2) WHAT, GIVEN POLITICAL PROSPECTS, IS OPTIMUM PCV STRENGTH IN SUPPORT OF SWAZILAND'S ECONOMIC, SOCIAL AND EDUCATIONAL DEVELOPMENT?

THIS POLITICAL ASSESSMENT CONCLUDES WITH RECOMMENDED LIMITS ON SIZE OF USAID AND NUMBERS OF PCVS IN SWAZILAND, TAKING INTO ACCOUNT THE DYNAMIC EFFECT OF ACCELERATING POLITICAL DEVELOPMENTS ON PRESENT U.S. GOALS AND OBJECTIVES IN THE COUNTRY.

2. SUMMARY. SWAZILAND HAS ENTERED A PERIOD OF ACCELERATED TRANSITION THAT WILL BE MARKED BY FURTHER INSTABILITY. THE CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 GABORO 03206 01 OF 03 161116Z

TRADITIONAL TRIBAL MONARCHY OF KING SOBHUZA II WILL GRADUALLY GIVE WAY. THE TRANSITION WILL HAVE CONSEQUENCES FOR THE SIZABLE U.S. AID AND P/C PRESENCE IN SWAZILAND WHICH LEADS US TO MAKE SPECIFIC RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE FUTURE. END SUMMARY.

3. THE SETTING. SWAZILAND IS AN ARENA OF COMPETITION BETWEEN THE FORCES REPRESENTED BY THE TRADITIONAL TRIBAL MONARCHY OF KING SOBHUZA II, ON THE ONE HAND, AND THE INELUCTABLE ECONOMIC AND OTHER PRESSURES FOR MODERNIZATION ON THE OTHER. IN PERHAPS NO OTHER COUNTRY IN THE WORLD IS THE GULF AS GREAT BETWEEN THESE TWO COMPETING IDEAS. WHILE THERE ARE (FORTUNATELY) INDIVIDUALS AND GROUPS WHO HAVE VITAL INTERESTS IN BOTH CAMPS AND IN A SENSE SERVE TO BRIDGE THE GULF, THE TWO PRINCIPAL FORCES THEMSELVES REMAIN POLES APART.

4. THE KING. FIRST AND FOREMOST, IT SHOULD BE NOTED THAT POLITICAL POWER AND AUTHORITY IN SWAZILAND ARE THE UNDISPUTED DOMAIN OF H.M. KING SOBHUZA II WHO CONTINUES TO RULE IN THE STYLE OF AN ABSOLUTE (ALTHOUGH BENEVOLENT) TRIBAL MONARCH. HIS POWER IS ROOTED IN THE ETHNIC COHESION OF THE SWAZI PEOPLE (OR NATION) AND THEIR TRIBAL TRADITIONS WHICH ARE STILL FAITHFULLY, AND APPARENTLY GLADLY, OBSERVED BY THE OVERWHELMING

MAJORITY OF THE COUNTRY'S HALF-MILLION INHABITANTS. IT IS A TRIBUTE TO THE EXTRAORDINARY STRENGTH AND STAYING POWER OF THE TRADITIONS AND CHARISMA OF KING SOBHUZA HIMSELF THAT THE BELIEFS AND RITUALS HAVE REMAINED VIRTUALLY INTACT INTO THE LAST QUARTER OF THE TWENTIETH CENTURY. IN A WORD, SWAZILAND IS NOT ONLY RULED BUT COMPLETELY DOMINATED BY A TRADITIONAL, TRIBAL, 78-YEAR OLD MONARCH.

CONFIDENTIAL

NNN

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 GABORO 03206 02 OF 03 161051Z
ACTION AF-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-07
L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15
USIA-06 AID-05 EB-08 TRSE-00 OMB-01 COME-00
AGRE-00 PC-01 IO-13 MMO-01 /086 W
-----070343 161129Z /11

R 160827Z DEC 77
FM AMEMBASSY GABORONE
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1268
INFO AMEMBASSY MBABANE
AMEMBASSY MAPUTO POUCH
AMEMBASSY MASERU POUCH
AMEMBASSY PRETORIA POUCH

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 3 GABORONE 3206

5. THE CHALLENGE. WHILE POLITICALLY THE COUNTRY IS RULED BY ANCIENT TRADITIONS, IT HAS A SIGNIFICANT AND EXPANDING MODERN SECTOR AND ITS ASPIRATIONS TO ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT DO NOT DIFFER SUBSTANTIALLY FROM THOSE OF ANY OTHER DEVELOPING COUNTRY. IN FACT, ITS VARIED NATURAL RESOURCES, AMPLE RAINFALL AND MODERATE CLIMATE HAVE ATTRACTED IMPORTANT FOREIGN INVESTMENTS FOR MORE THAN 25 YEARS, WHICH HAVE GIVEN SWAZILAND A REMARKABLY HEALTHY AND DIVERSIFIED ECONOMIC GROWTH. THE MODERN ECONOMIC SECTOR HAS DEVELOPED UNDER THE PROTECTION, AND APPARENTLY WITH THE COOPERATION AND ENCOURAGEMENT, OF THE TRADITIONAL MONARCH OR, PERHAPS MORE PRECISELY, OF HIS FAMILY AND CABINET MEMBERS AND INTIMATE ADVISORS. WHATEVER THE EXPLANATION, THIS ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT HAS HAD AN INCREASINGLY EVIDENT IMPACT ON SWAZI POLITICAL AND SOCIAL LIFE. IN ADDITION TO THE PROFOUND SOCIAL CHANGES PRODUCED BY MODERN COMMUNICATIONS AND CULTURAL IMPORTATIONS, SEVERAL ASPECTS OF MODERN ECONOMIC LIFE HAVE HAD A PARTICULARLY CORROSIVE EFFECT ON POLITICAL STABILITY. THESE INCLUDE: (A) LACK OF SUITABLE EMPLOYMENT FOR SCHOOL GRADUATES

AND SCHOOL-LEVERS WHOSE NUMBERS EXCEED THE NUMBER OF OPENINGS
AVAILABLE IN THE GOVERNMENTAL AND PRIVATE SECTORS; (B) THE MIGRATION
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 GABORO 03206 02 OF 03 161051Z

FROM RURAL TO URBAN AREAS, WHERE LACK OF SUITABLE HOUSING AS
WELL AS UNDEREMPLOYMENT BREED DISCONTENT; AND (C) INFLATION,
WHICH IS NOT ADEQUATELY COMPENSATED FOR IN WAGE ADJUSTMENTS
OWING TO THE ABSENCE OF LABOR-BARGAINING MACHINERY AND THE PRO-
HIBITION ON STRIKES. THESE FACTORS, SINGLY OR IN COMBINATION,
ARE CONTRIBUTING TO DISCONTENT FOR WHICH THERE IS NO EFFECTIVE
OUTLET IN THE ABSENCE OF ELECTIONS OR MACHINERY FOR EXPRESSING
GRIEVANCES RELATED TO THE MODERN SECTOR. THE VIRTUALLY UN-
PRECEDENTED TEACHER-STUDENT DISTURBANCES OF MID-OCTOBER
CHALLENGED THE GOVERNMENT FOR HAVING FAILED TO MEET LEGITIMATE
DEMANDS OF TEACHING PROFESSION. KING'S INADEQUATE RESPONSE TO
THE DEMONSTRATIONS WAS PRIVATELY BUT WIDELY CRITICIZED. BECAUSE
THE PENT-UP DEMANDS FOR CHANGE ARE OF UNKNOWN DIMENSIONS, THE
SCOPE, PACE AND DIRECTION OF CHANGE ARE OBSCURE. AT THE VERY
LEAST, HOWEVER, ONE CAN BE CONFIDENT THEY WILL BE RELEASED
UPON THE PASSING OF KING SOBHUZA II.

6. NEIGHBORS. IF SWAZILAND WERE LOCATED IN A PART OF AFRICA
LESS BESET BY CONFLICT, IT MIGHT HAVE BEEN ABLE TO DELAY OR
CONTROL THE PACE OF ITS TRANSITION. WITH THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC
OF MOZAMBIQUE AND THE NATIONALIST PARTY'S AFRIKAANER REPUBLIC
OF SOUTH AFRICA AS ITS NEIGHBORS, HOWEVER, AND GIVEN THE TENSIONS
AND ISSUES GENERATED BY BOTH, THE KIND OF ISOLATION ENJOYED
BY THE KINGDOM OF SWAZILAND IN THE PAST IS IMPOSSIBLE. ON THE
ONE HAND, GPRM WITH ITS AVOWEDLY MARXIST-LENINIST REGIME AND
SOCIALIST ECONOMIC SYSTEM, IS ALMOST THE ANTITHESIS OF SWAZILAND'S
FOREIGN-DOMINATED PRIVATE CAPITALIST ECONOMY. MOZAMBIQUE'S
LEADERS, FORMED BY TEN YEARS OF LIBERATION STRUGGLE, HAVE
THUS FAR BEEN TOLERANT OF THE SMALL TRADITIONAL MONARCHY ON THEIR
BORDER-- UNDERSTANDABLY, GIVEN THEIR FULL-TIME PRE-
OCCUPATION WITH THEIR OWN ECONOMIC PROBLEMS AND THE
LIBERATION OF RHODESIA. RECENT EXCHANGES OF VISITS AND THE SIGNING
OF AN ECONOMIC COOPERATION AGREEMENT BETWEEN GOS AND GPRM
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 GABORO 03206 02 OF 03 161051Z

INDICATE THAT THEY CAN COEXIST. PRIVATELY, HOWEVER, SWAZIS ARE
ALOOF AND FEARFUL WITH REGARD TO THEIR GPRM NEIGHBOR.

7. SOUTH AFRICA. RELATIONS ARE BETTER WITH SOUTH AFRICA
WHOSE OVERWHELMING ECONOMIC INFLUENCE IN SWAZILAND IS
NOT RESENTED. THEIR ONLY SERIOUS DIFFERENCE IS OVER APARTHEID
WHICH IS AT VARIANCE WITH THE MULTI-RACIAL POLICY OF THE GOS.

THE NET EFFECT OF THE GOS' NEIGHBORS, HOWEVER, IS TO HASTEN
CHANGE AND MAKE IT MORE DIFFICULT FOR THE GOS TO CONTROL.

CONFIDENTIAL

NNN

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 GABORO 03206 03 OF 03 161100Z
ACTION AF-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-07
L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15
USIA-06 AID-05 EB-08 IO-13 TRSE-00 OMB-01 COME-00
AGRE-00 PC-01 MMO-01 /086 W
-----070414 161128Z /11

R 160827Z DEC 77
FM AMEMBASSY GABORONE
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1269
INFO AMEMBASSY MBABANE
AMEMBASSY MAPUTO POUCH
AMEMBASSY MASERU POURH
AMEMBASSY PRETORIA POUCH

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 3 OF 3 GABORONE 3206

8. CONSEQUENCES FOR U.S. GIVEN THE FACT OF TRANSITION
AND THE UNCERTAINTIES SURROUNDING IT, THE CONSEQUENCES
FOR U.S. OFFICIAL PRESENCE (PARTICULARLY SOME 14 USDH
AID AND 145 PCVS IN SWAZILAND) SHOULD BE APPARENT.
FIRST, THE EXPERIENCE OF THE PAST TWO MONTHS MAKES IT
DOUBTFUL THAT THE TRANSITION CAN BE ACHIEVED WITHOUT
FURTHER INSTABILITY AND UNREST. THE EXTENT AND SERIOUSNESS
OF DISTURBANCES WILL DEPEND UPON HOW WIDE THE GAP
BECOMES BETWEEN THE TRADITIONAL AND THE MODERN FORCES
IN SWAZI SOCIETY. THE WIDER THE GAP, THE MORE
DISRUPTIVE THE CHANGE. ON THE OTHER HAND, WE BELIEVE
THAT EXTREMES CAN BE AVOIDED, THAT THE WISDOM AND
POPULARITY OF THE KING OR HIS SUCCESSORS CAN PREVENT
ANOTHER ETHIOPIA FROM DEVELOPING. WE DO NOT ANTICIPATE
A BREAKDOWN IN LAW AND ORDER OVER A SUSTAINED PERIOD,
I.E., LEADING TO TOTAL DISRUPTION OF AID AND P/C ACTIVITIES
OR THREATS TO THE SAFETY AND SECURITY OF AMERICAN
CITIZENS; SECOND, SINCE WE DO NOT KNOW WITH CERTAINTY
WHO OR WHAT WILL FOLLOW THE KING, OUR POLICY DECISIONS
SHOULD BE TAKEN IN RECOGNITION THAT A LARGE ELEMENT OF
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 GABORO 03206 03 OF 03 161100Z

UNCERTAINTY EXISTS. PRUDENCE DICTATES THAT WE NO LONGER PROCEED ON THE ASSUMPTION THAT A LARGE REGIONAL OFFICE WILL BE IMMUNE FROM CRITICISM OR EVEN ATTACK FROM THE NEW EMERGING FORCES. OUR PRESENCE SHOULD BE SUITABLY LOW PROFILE;

THIRD, SPECIFICALLY U.S. PRESENCE IN SWAZILAND, GIVEN THE POTENTIAL RISKS AND BENEFITS TO U.S. INTERESTS OF OUR AID AND P/C PROGRAMS, SHOULD NOT EXCEED CURRENT NUMBERS BY MORE THAN 15 PERCENT IN THE CASE OF AID AND THE NUMBER OF PCVS SHOULD BE REDUCED. AID IS ALREADY THE MOST PROMINENT FOREIGN ASSISTANCE OPERATION IN THE COUNTRY. TO EXPAND IT SIGNIFICANTLY WOULD RISK MAKING THE U.S. A TEMPTING TARGET FOR EITHER RADICAL DEMONSTRATORS, E.G., FROM UNIVERSITY OR SCHOOLS, OR XENOPHOBIC TRADITIONALISTS WHO OPPOSE THEM. THE P/C SHOULD GRADUALLY REDUCE ITS PCV CONTINGENT TO 90 OVER THE NEXT FEW MONTHS AND BE FURTHER REDUCED BY THE END OF 1978;

FOURTH, OUR OVERALL INVESTMENT OF RESOURCES IN SWAZILAND SHOULD NOT BE SO GREAT THAT WE COULD NOT EASILY OR GRACEFULLY ABANDON IT, AT LEAST TEMPORARILY, IF DISTURBANCES SHOULD TAKE PLACE OVER A SUSTAINED PERIOD. MBABANE'S REGIONAL AID ROLE AND RESPONSIBILITIES SHOULD BE LIMITED SO THAT SUCH A BREAKDOWN IN SERVICES WOULD NOT IMMOBILIZE IMPORTANT OPERATIONS IN OTHER COUNTRIES. NORLAND

CONFIDENTIAL

NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: FOREIGN POLICY POSITION
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Sent Date: 16-Dec-1977 12:00:00 am
Decaption Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1977GABORO03206
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D770469-0110
Format: TEL
From: GABORONE
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1977/newtext/t19771248/aaaabohg.tel
Line Count: 307
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: f1c04c02-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION AF
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 6
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 77 STATE 291277
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 10-Feb-2005 12:00:00 am
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 208924
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: SWAZILAND: POLICY OBJECTIVES, POLITICAL ASSESSMENT AND RESOURCE RECOMMENDATIONS
TAGS: AMGT, PFOR, WZ
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odhc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/f1c04c02-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
22 May 2009
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009